

ress of Medical Science but for the protection of public health. It has been invariably observed that wherever lax Medical Practice laws are loosely enforced the general average of Medical Standards and work is proportionately low. It could not be otherwise.

Anyone who will contribute ideas that will strengthen the present Medical Practice Act and raise its standards from their present low level will be rendering a service to the health of this commonwealth.

It is the professional and civic duty of every member of the medical profession to take a personal interest in this matter. Past inactivity and the general indifference of the medical profession of this State are all reflected in the indulgent and incongruous provisions that are shot through the present act. In suggesting and advocating the raising of standards to keep abreast of the progress of medical science no selfish thought inspires our action. The Medical Practice Act is intended for the benefit of all the people, and whatever will benefit the public most is best for the profession. Here in California we should be satisfied with nothing less than the best. Read the present Medical Practice Act carefully and send to the League that has engaged in this worthy enterprise your best constructive thought.

PHYSICIANS—REPORT COMMUNICABLE DISEASES
WITHOUT DELAY.

WHAT IS MEDICINE?

From the Latin "medeor," to cure, and hence as Webster states, medicine means the art of preventing, curing or alleviating the diseases of the human body. To this we would add only one extension, to bring the term thoroughly up to date and make it completely descriptive. Medicine means not only the prevention, cure and alleviation of diseases of the body but also of the mind. This was of necessity included in the first definition but is worth noting specifically in addition. Thus it is seen that if our definition be true, the art of medicine includes all that pertains to prevention of disease and maintenance of health, all that pertains to the cure of disease and all that tends to make incurable or unavoidable disease more endurable. In passing, it may again be emphatically stated that such a definition makes of primary importance the study of disease causes and results. For without this knowledge we are unable effectively to limit, control or cure disease. Further, to diagnose disease requires a certain fundamental knowledge of the human body and mind in their functional as well as their morphological relationships. Such knowledge, in turn, presupposes a certain temperament of the student and scientist who can scan facts and evidence with impartial eye, and also presupposes a certain groundwork of more elementary study which is necessary to fit the seeker for his higher studies on the complex processes of life and so-called death.

We have here then, an all-inclusive and most scientific art, denominated medicine, which is concerned with the most vital relations of human

life. The merest glance at its field shows that it is the most important of all arts and sciences and, insofar as any other art, science, pursuit, or craft has a vital human significance, so must it be included in the field of medicine in the broad sense. Of all men, the physician with most literal truth can say, "*Nihil humanum mihi alienum.*"

With such a definition, and such a program, small wonder is it that physicians tend to become specialists and sometimes forget the wide horizons of their profession in the narrow delving into some one important but limited scope of endeavor. Every physician is a specialist to the extent that he cannot keep in touch with all human progress which bears on our definition of medicine. He must perforce follow within the limits of time, space and strength which are assigned him. Once in a while, he may on some hill-top of inspiration or introspection, realize how organically close is the connection and inter-relationship between all the intricate and dissimilar parts of human life and progress which have any bearing on medicine as defined above.

So much for the definition of medicine as it affects the physician. There is another and fully as important aspect of the matter. The general public, together with the advocates of certain narrow medical or semi-medical cults, and various faddists, are prone to say that there is such a thing as "allopathy," and "old school doctors," and "regulars." The attention of all these is directed to our definition above. Some of these narrower schools of medical art, as for instance, the eclectics, even go so far as to claim that the advance of modern medicine is due to the revolt of eclecticism from what is misguidedly called the "old school." Such a statement simply illustrates a narrow perspective which leaves out of account the definition of medicine here emphasized.

Modern medicine, as defined, has no quarrel with any agency or method for prevention, cure or alleviation of disease, physical or mental. Modern medicine is all-inclusive of agencies and methods which are of service in the prevention, cure or alleviation of disease. Being scientific and therefore demanding a catholicity of selection of those methods and ideas which shall receive its approval, modern medicine requires that any system or idea must prove its right to acceptance, by the results it can achieve, and that its claims and employment shall not extend beyond the range of its actual merits. To this extent all effective means of prevention, cure and alleviation of disease are a part of modern medicine, and to a surprisingly large extent, are actually employed by medicine in the attainment of its ends. Medicine is not concerned with the local labels which may be appended to certain methods or systems. What is good in these systems it uses and has always used. Its selection is catholic and gauged by two things, accurate diagnosis and accurate fitting to the diagnosis of the best available remedial or preventive agency, be that agency what or whose it may. In medicine there are no patented ideas. Nothing is so democratic as science. There each stands on his own merit. Wealth, fame, posi-

tion, family, help no whit. Medicine chooses from all for service to all.

As has been stated, the criterion of selection of therapeutic agencies is the measure of their effectiveness only. The source is not considered. Two further considerations, however, arise, with reference to their application. In the first place, the individual who seeks to exercise the healing art as a physician, must be honest. In the second place he must have sufficient knowledge of physical and mental anatomy and function as to enable him correctly to diagnose and correctly to fit the remedy to the diagnosis. Proper education is therefore the first and primary fundamental for the physician. Medicine embraces all that pertains to the elimination of disease. It is as absurd to elevate some limited and local truth to the position of a universal system as it is to claim that there is no disease and no need for cure. The one violates medicine's requirement for proper education, while the other makes all existence ridiculous and destroys charity, faith and progress.

The modern physician is not an "allopath," he is not a "regular," he is not "old school" or "new school." "Revolt against the regulars" and the "old school" is about as sensible as revolt against the sunrise or the lunar control of tides. Whenever such a claim is made, look for the wood-shrouded African and you will find almost invariably a short-cut to the honor and earned prestige of the real physician, or else an easy way to separate the unthinking public from its cash. The blatant advertising of chiropractice, that it offers a new and lucrative field for quick riches and social prestige, is self-evidence that the cure, prevention and alleviation of disease is but a means to an end, and therefore that the candidate's preparation and effectiveness is to be the minimum which will permit him to twist the principles of medicine to his own selfish ends. In effect, they say, "The public be damned, we want cash, and the prestige of the doctor." Against such tendencies to lower medical practice requirements, legislatures have very properly considered the health of the people, which is their most valuable possession, as of more importance than the pocket books of the claimants for lower entrance requirements. A diffusing knowledge among the people of this and other states, of the real definition of medicine, and of the real objects and results of efforts to lower medical practice requirements, will lead to a concerted and popular backing-up of the legislature in the establishment of a thoroughly satisfactory medical practice act, which shall at once protect the people against the charlatan and the get-rich-quick faddist, and render available for the people the best that modern medicine can give, when unhandicapped by distracting issues and unnecessary burdens.

PHYSICIANS: VARICELLA CASES SHOULD ALWAYS BE REPORTED AT ONCE.

THE CALIFORNIA PROBLEM OF CRIPPLED CHILDREN.

Special attention is directed to the article in this issue by Dr. Harry Leslie Langnecker on "Clinic for Crippled Children." The matter is so

pressing and so little comparatively has been done in this regard that it deserves the earnest attention of the medical profession.

With the realization that over two thousand children, residents of this State, are handicapped by some crippling or deformed condition,—and that deformity amenable to treatment,—the problem of efficient correction and care becomes, at once, a matter of grave medical concern. Indeed there are special reasons why, at the present time, this branch of child welfare work should be carefully investigated, and means provided to handle properly these cases. In the first place, most of the families having a crippled child, are not financially able to obtain the best treatment. As a result the condition becomes progressively worse. As the child grows older the chances for satisfactory surgical results are reduced. In the second place, those cases that are able to attend a free clinic, are not usually the worst deformed and treatment is not thoroughly carried on. They are only partly controlled and therefore the ultimate outcome is not very gratifying to the surgeon. In the third place, the physicians who have been specifically trained in the utilization of the various methods and means for the correction of deformities, are located in the cities, near the larger medical institutions. And finally, the education of these children, possibly owing to their inability to attend the public schools, is sadly neglected and their mental attitude, therefore, decidedly warped.

The idea of an institution where not only the deformity might be corrected, and the means provided for the long period of treatment, but also, at the same time, the child might be given a practical education, seems both sane and logical. Unlike most state institutions, where the main object is to care for the hopeless physically unfit, such an establishment would be a hospital in so far as the disability would need treatment plus a manual training school adapted to educating the child.

Graduation would signify completion of treatment and education equivalent to the grade attained at the same age in the public school.

PHYSICIANS—REMEMBER THE IMPORTANCE OF PROMPTLY REPORTING BIRTHS.

"SCHOOLS ARE PUBLIC NOT THE CHILDREN."

How often have you heard the above platitude? The few that oppose the physical examination of school children regularly rehearse it and sing it in chorus at indignation meetings.

Children's year has impressed upon most parents in California the need and value of frequent examinations. Physical examinations of 53,462 children in forty-five counties of the state disclosed that 46.6 per cent. had defects, 36 per cent. abnormal tonsils and adenoids, 24.7 per cent. were below the height or weight of the national scale, 5.5 per cent. had defective teeth.

In San Diego more than 77 per cent. of the children examined between the ages of one to six years, inclusive, were defective. It is obvious that the wealth of work done during Children's year